

12th February 2015**Agenda Item: 6****REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR FOR POLICY, PLANNING AND
CORPORATE SERVICES****MINERALS SEARCH INCOME****Purpose of the Report**

1. To review the fees charged for the provision of information through Mineral Searches.

Information and Advice

2. The County Council's Planning Policy Team can provide specific information in relation to minerals extraction about a particular site/property and the surrounding area for buyers and sellers and other interested parties. On request, the team prepares a report to identify if a local area is likely to be affected by existing or future quarrying operations. This service is undertaken as part of 'The Local Authorities (England) (Charges for Property Searches) Regulations 2008'. A charge is made for this service.
3. The report identifies:
 - If the property is situated within a mineral consultation area (i.e. an area containing a potentially economic mineral resource);
 - Any planning permissions granted for quarrying or related operations on land near to the property, and the status of that site (e.g. active, closed, dormant, not commenced);
 - Mineral-related policies of the Local Plan relating to the land surrounding the property which could include details of land identified by the plan for future mineral working;
 - Any planning applications submitted to Nottinghamshire County Council for quarrying or related operations near the property.

As the County Council is not responsible for maintaining records on Deep Mined Coal extraction, the searches do not include this information and, if requested, applicants are directed to the Coal Authority to acquire this information.

4. Following the changes to planning legislation in 2004, mineral consultation areas were no longer nationally recognised and, as a consequence, the number of requests for mineral searches has decreased.
5. In June 2013 this Committee approved an increase in the fee charged for this service from £20.00 to £60.00 (plus VAT) to be consistent with other Mineral Planning Authorities.

6. Prior to the economic downturn and changes in planning legislation, the County Council received, on average, approximately 300 search requests per year. In 2012 this significantly decreased to 60 and has decreased again with the total for 2014 being 20.
7. The income received between 1st January 2014 and 31st December 2014 was £1,200.00.
8. The current fee of £60.00 covers the costs of the work carried out and given the small number of searches undertaken it is not proposed to increase the fee for 2015/16. The charge is kept under annual review.

Other Options Considered

9. To amend the current fee, however, the fee is consistent with other Mineral Planning Authorities and reflects the amount of work undertaken.

Reason/s for Recommendation/s

10. To ensure the current charge for mineral searches is appropriate.

Statutory and Policy Implications

11. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of finance, the public sector equality duty, human resources, crime and disorder, human rights, the safeguarding of children, sustainability and the environment and those using the service and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

Financial Implications

12. The current fee charged is appropriate and will ensure that the County Council continues to receive the appropriate income for the level of work carried out.

Implications for Sustainability and the Environment

13. There are no direct implications for Sustainability and the Environment

RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1) That the fee for undertaking minerals searches remains at £60.00 for 2015/16.

Jayne Francis-Ward
Corporate Director, Policy, Planning and Corporate Services

For any enquiries about this report please contact: Lisa Bell, Planning Policy Team Manager, ext 74547

Constitutional Comments (SLB 19/12/2014)

14. Environment and Sustainability Committee is the appropriate body to consider the content of this report.

Financial Comments (SEM 22/12/14)

15. The financial implications are set out in the report.

Background Papers and Published Documents

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

All

